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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. FUENTES-IBANEZ (Bolivia)
(Vice-Chairman)

later: (Tunisia)

Mr. KHOUINI
(Chairman)

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In the absence of Mr. Khouini (Tunisia), Mr. Fuentes-Ibanez (Bolivia) Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE WHOLE QUESTION OF PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS IN ALL THEIR ASPECTS (A/SPC/47/L.7, L.8 and L.11) (continued)

1. Mrs. TAHIR-KHELI (United States of America), speaking in explanation of her delegation's vote on draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.7 before the vote, said she was pleased that the draft resolution offered the positive suggestions with regard to financing contained in paragraphs 15, 17 and 18. Her delegation also wished to note that, in its view, paragraph 13 was intended to call on nations to observe the principles and guidelines covering the financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations, and that nothing contained in the paragraph should be interpreted to discourage the consideration or implementation of improvements that would add to the solid financial foundation that was essential to United Nations peace-keeping operations.

2. Draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.7 was adopted without a vote.

3. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) announced that her delegation had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.8.

4. Draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.8 was adopted without a vote.

AGENDA ITEM 76: QUESTIONS RELATING TO INFORMATION (A/47/21, A/47/462 and Corr.1; A/SPC/47/L.9, L.10* and L.13) (continued)

5. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that document A/SPC/47/L.13 set out the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/SPC/47/L.10.

6. Mr. KHANDOGY (Ukraine) said that the past year had seen profound qualitative changes in the world and therefore in the United Nations. The task of the Organization's information services was to make known and understandable the depth and significance of those changes and thus to assist in the integration of the new States into the world community. Many of the young democracies were going through a difficult transition and some had become an arena of acute conflict between nationalities which threatened the political stability of their region. The world community could help them to overcome their difficulties by providing objective information on what was going on and supporting the reform process within them.

7. One of the important channels through which that work could be carried out was the system of United Nations information centres. His country was prepared to participate in the work of providing reliable information to the new democratic Member States through those centres, and could do so usefully

(Mr. Khandogy, Ukraine)

in view of its geographic proximity to and its ethnic, linguistic and cultural affinities with the peoples of many of them.

8. In view of the importance of information in the context he had just mentioned, his delegation would request the Department of Public Information (DPI) to consider the possibility of establishing a system-wide information programme for new Member States and plans for support to States' information structures. In that connection, his delegation placed great hope in the new UNDP offices opened in many of those States, including Ukraine.

9. Ukraine's information services had in a short time acquired the principles and values of the democratic press, and grown considerably thanks in large part to the help the country had received in developing its information infrastructure from other countries and from private donors. The positive results of that cooperation had made it possible for the Ukrainian media to act as equal partners in subregional and regional information structures. Unfortunately, however, the further development of those structures was being hindered by problems connected with the apportionment of the huge information resources of the previous all-Union media, all of which had been inherited by the Russian Federation. From that point of view, it was very important that the provisions of the General Assembly resolution entitled "Information in service of humanity" (resolution 46/23) be fully implemented.

10. His delegation also felt that the danger of the influence of unobjective and sometimes provocative information have been underestimated, and agreed that there was a need to combat it. Censorship was, of course, out of the question, but his delegation was convinced of the need to involve the United Nations more actively in the work of combating such anti-humane information and felt that the Committee on Information might well give attention to that problem.

11. Mr. TRUONG TRIEU DUONG (Viet Nam) said that the new world situation was opening up new opportunities for, but at the same time presenting acute challenges to, the peace, security and prosperity of the whole international community. Peace and development remained the two major issues confronting the people of all countries. Since there was a close link between communication and development, the need for countries both to improve their own communication and information capabilities and to increase contacts with other countries had become increasingly urgent. However, a gap still existed between the rich and the poor countries in terms of information and communication. The flow of information tended to go in only one direction, and that had not only positive but many negative effects on the poor countries which were the majority. That imbalance must be redressed.

12. Against that backdrop, the need for the establishment of a more balanced and effective new world information and communication order had become all the more urgent. Such a new order must respect the cultural and social values of all States and the identity and sovereignty of all nations. It should

(Mr. Truong Trieu Duong, Viet Nam)

genuinely facilitate the free flow of information which helped strengthen international peace and security and promote mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation among nations. Attempts to use the media to distort the facts or impose one's will on another did not serve those aims and must be rejected. Special attention and greater assistance, especially through transfer of technology and sharing of professional expertise, should be given to developing countries for the development of their communication infrastructures and capabilities.

13. In that context the United Nations, which was uniquely placed to provide global solutions to global problems, must assume a more important role. In fact, the United Nations system had proved to have enormous potential for promoting cooperation in the field of information and communication. For years, UNESCO had made serious efforts towards that end, and his delegation wished to express once again its support of those efforts and of UNESCO's activities to assist developing countries in the promotion of their communications capacities, particularly under the International Programme for the Development of Communication. It also encouraged DPI to break new ground in helping to contribute to the establishment of a new world information and communications order and to increase its cooperation with UNESCO. In that connection, his delegation commended the Department's efforts to enhance its increasingly important role in public information activities as well as its work in implementing General Assembly resolutions on priority issues. It was pleased to note DPI's efforts to ensure timely dissemination of its materials on those issues, but felt that it should also give high priority to providing countries, especially the developing countries which did not have information centres, with more information materials and other necessary assistance. It also attached importance to DPI's training programme for broadcasters and journalists and hoped that more opportunities would be provided for Vietnamese professionals to participate in future programmes.

14. His delegation also shared the concern expressed by others with regard to the continuing imbalance of the geographical distribution of posts within the department, particularly at the middle and higher levels. The Department should give more attention to redressing that situation, and higher priority must be given to countries like his own which remained unrepresented.

15. Viet Nam was committed to the freedoms of information, opinion and expression and had demonstrated that commitment both in words and in deeds. The Vietnamese Government attached great importance to the development of the mass media. It was making every effort to acquire advanced technology for the development of its national information and communication system and, thanks to those efforts, the mass media had become a strong force that contributed greatly to the renovation and process of renewal and development taking place in Viet Nam.

16. While recognizing and encouraging freedom of expression and opinion, his delegation shared the concern expressed about the use of radio and television

(Mr. Truong Trieu Duong, Viet Nam)

broadcast from some countries solely for hostile purposes against others. It was its view that genuine freedom of information in the press must be accompanied by a sense of responsibility in order to avoid producing and disseminating disinformation and misleading opinion. That freedom implied freedom for all to inform and be informed accurately and objectively. Any attempt to abuse that freedom or ignore its abuse must be strongly denounced.

17. Mr. Fhouini (Tunisia) took the Chair.

18. Mr. MONGBE (Benin) said that it was difficult to imagine how a country aspiring for a better life for its people could possibly attain that goal without creating the conditions necessary for a free and pluralistic press. As a State which had recently restored democracy and the rule of law after a 10-year hiatus, Benin recognized the important role of a free press in promoting democracy and development. That was why his Government endorsed the conclusions of the report of the Committee on Information regarding the establishment of a new world information and communication order and the practical actions which the Organization could take in the field of public information. As the course of world events was unpredicatable the Committee's consensus should not be regarded as an end in itself, but rather a point of departure for future debate concerning the mandate of DPI.

19. Despite many statements to the contrary, it was clear that the gap between the developed and developing countries with respect to information capabilities was widening every day. Benin, therefore welcomed the initiative of UNESCO - through its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) - to help countries of limited means improve their communications infrastructures. However, he noted that the Programme's activities had been hampered recently by a lack of resources. He also welcomed the Declaration of the Windhoek Seminar on the Development of an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, and expressed the hope that future seminars could be organized in other regions of the developing world. In addition, his Government supported the proposal of UNESCO to proclaim 3 May Press Freedom Day.

20. Benin agreed that DPI should take steps to reach more diverse audiences through the use of up-to-date communication technologies, and measures should be taken to ensure that the Department had the resources necessary to execute that task. Therefore, while his Government acknowledged the serious financial difficulties confronting the Organization, he believed that it would be better to improve the effectiveness and productivity of DPI - by, for example, modernizing its procedures and rationalizing its funding mechanism - than to reduce its budget. If necessary the Department could even make additional use of extrabudgetary resources and reserve funds to finance urgent projects.

21. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/462), he noted with satisfaction that the Department had followed the recommendations of the General Assembly regarding the priority of issues on which greater public

(Mr. Mongbe, Benin)

information was necessary. In that connection, DPI deserved special recognition for its information programme during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. In the future, DPI would also play a central role in the dissemination of information for the coming World Conference on Human Rights and the Fourth World Conference on Women.

22. Given the renewed respect for the Organization among the general public, it was perfectly natural that the functions of DPI should be expanded to include coordination of the activities of United Nations information centres, so that as large a number of people as possible could be informed of the work of the United Nations. In that context, his delegation wished to receive more information regarding the Under-Secretary-General's suggestion to consolidate information and development activities. He noted the efforts that were currently under way to incorporate an "information component" into the activities of the UNDP in certain regions, and said that assigning responsibility for information activities to UNDP personnel could lead to the elimination of certain directors' positions or even the closing of some centres. While Benin recognized the need to reduce the cost of public information activities, nevertheless it was paradoxical that the Organization should contemplate closing information centres just as the peoples of the world, particularly those of the developing countries, were becoming more receptive to the message of the United Nations with regard to human rights and democracy. The loss of support for local media in the third world would be particularly damaging, as some local media institutions were just beginning to become more independent and pluralistic. Moreover, since most of the developing countries that were hosting information centres provided either financial contributions or free use of local facilities, it would be regrettable if the measures announced in the Secretary-General's report should reduce the effectiveness of those information centres. The Committee should examine the question of closing information centres very carefully and consider ways of reconciling the need for their rational management with the real needs of countries.

23. Benin supported the draft resolutions approved by the Committee on Information at its sixteenth session, and welcomed the request contained in the second draft resolution regarding efforts the Secretary-General could make to achieve parity between English and French in the press coverage of the General Assembly.

24. Turning to the question of radio broadcasting in Africa, he said that there was currently a high level of cooperation between the Africa unit in the United Nations Radio Section and African radio stations. Nevertheless, coverage of events in Africa remained inadequate. Also, despite agreements between the DPI and state radio agencies in Africa, the number of stations broadcasting programmes in French remained relatively small, and relays of French broadcasts were made only through Radio Cairo. He suggested that the Committee could examine the possibility of increasing the number of relay stations. In addition, his delegation was surprised that the report made no mention of the geographical distribution of personnel in the United Nations

(Mr. Mongbe, Benin)

Radio Section, and he requested the Secretariat to provide the Committee with relevant information.

25. The regional meetings of the information centres directors had been very useful. Proposals from those meetings regarding special information programmes for local centre directors could impart a new dynamism to the centres' activities.

26. Mrs. MAIKARFI (Niger) said that, in spite of the progress achieved during the previous ten years, there was a persistent imbalance between developed and developing countries in information processing and dissemination. Greater access to state-of-the-art information and communication technologies would allow the developing countries to catch up and would strengthen cultural pluralism. It was imperative, therefore, to establish a new, fairer and more efficient new world information and communication order on the basis of free circulation and balanced distribution of information. The United Nations, through DPI, had a fundamental role to play in that area.

27. Her delegation particularly welcomed the Organization's efforts in raising awareness of certain issues and in preparing for such future international meetings as the World Conference on Human Rights to be held in Vienna in June 1993 and the International Conference on Population and Development (Egypt, 1994), as well as the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in China, and the World Summit for Social Development, both planned for 1995.

28. Despite the positive elements, the United Nations continued to give pride of place to developed countries in sharing out budgetary resources for communications. Thus, the 12 United Nations information centres situated in Northern countries received more than two thirds of the relevant resources, while the 49 third world centres not only had to make do with the remaining third but also were in danger of coming under UNDP control. Worse, the very States that most urgently required United Nations information centres were first being asked to make an additional contribution; it was clear from the Secretary-General's report that such a contribution had been required in the case of the Sana'a centre. Meanwhile, those who could pay were not even required to supply premises free of charge, a concession that would save the Organization enough that it could afford to provide centres to those countries that needed them.

29. Her delegation hoped that the recommendations of the Committee on Information for increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation to reduce disparities and for increased assistance to developing countries for the development of their communications infrastructure could be implemented. It supported the work of the Department, but felt that the United Nations could do more by redeploying its resources so as to take into account the relative means of certain countries. Finally, she called for a director to be appointed to the United Nations Information Centre in Ouagadougou, which also served Niger.

30. Mr. OULD MOHAMED MAHMOUD (Mauritania), speaking on behalf of the five member States of the Arab Maghreb Union, Algeria, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Tunisia and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, said that there seemed to be a broad consensus in the Committee on the fundamental role played by information as the medium for dissemination of countries' values. The countries of the Union were committed to democratization and had adopted an information policy based on freedom and diversity within the framework of universally accepted ethical rules. It was clear, however, that while developing countries individually were trying to improve the quality and scope of their information media, there had been little progress in bringing greater balance, fairness and ethical content to world information flows. A new world information and communication order remained a legitimate aspiration of the international community. It was being sought by developing countries out of a real concern that certain peoples might be acculturated in view of the cultural content of the world media.

31. The new world information and communication order should lead to a rebalancing of information flow and increased information exchange between developed and developing countries. It should also allow regular technology transfer and ensure continuous training of journalists.

32. The Department of Public Information had shown determination and professionalism in implementing the General Assembly's recommendations, particulary those on the Palestine question, apartheid and environmental issues.

33. The States of the Arab Maghreb Union believed that the viability and independence of the United Nations information centres must be guaranteed and that they must be provided with human and material resources commensurate with their mission, as the lack of both was in many cases affecting their performance.

34. Mr. EKOUMILONG (Cameroon) said that the end of East-West confrontation and the considerable changes taking place in nearly all countries had made it possible for the principle of free flow of information to be unanimously recognized. His delegation saw information as fundamental to the United Nations role in building peace in the world, a role that implied the promotion of mutual understanding among peoples.

35. Although the theoretical underpinnings of United Nations policy on information were firm, much remained to be done in practical terms. There was a growing imbalance between developed countries and the third world, which cruelly lacked the modern means necessary to communicate to the world its own values, whether political, cultural, economic or social. Rather, countries of the South were deluged with news that lacked objectivity and, too often, impaired their image.

36. His delegation welcomed the fruitful cooperation of DPI with UNESCO in implementing the recommendations of the Windhoek and Alma Ata seminars. It

(Mr. Ekoumilong, Cameroon)

particularly encouraged the training for journalists from developing countries that had arisen out of that cooperation.

37. His delegation was pleased that the Yearbook of the United Nations was to appear without delay but deplored the serious financial difficulties of Development Forum, a unique economic publication with a loyal readership, and hoped that some way would be found to overcome the difficulties.

38. With regard to the process of integration of certain information centres with UNDP field offices, though the stated aim was to consolidate the United Nations image without jeopardizing the autonomy of the information component, his delegation held that Member States and particularly the Committee on Information should be amply consulted. The information centres' efforts, particularly in Africa, were important in eliminating such scourges as apartheid, poverty, drought and AIDS, and also promoted democracy and respect for human rights. His delegation encouraged the Department to pursue any policy tending to improve the material or technological means available to the centres, some of which had already been obliged to scale back their activities.

39. Free, independent and pluralistic information was again the order of the day in Cameroon, where dozens of private newspapers of every political stripe had sprung up since the press reforms of 1990. Cameroon was open to any support it might receive from international organizations or other sources to help it preserve democracy, particularly in the area of information. His delegation was pleased to support the draft resolutions as recommended by the Committee on Information.

40. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) reiterated her view that a new world information and communication order was a continuing and changing process aimed at guaranteeing freedom of expression, opinion and information for all, a basic human right set out in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was therefore imperative for journalists to be allowed to perform their work properly without restrictions and any attack against them must be deplored.

41. It had been interesting to note the new tasks and challenges taken on by the Department of Public Information in fulfilling its obligation to publicize accurately and rapidly the Organization's expanding activities in an era of unprecedented change. Peace-keeping operations in particular attracted great public interest, and DPI had produced a valuable video series on the subject. The DPI reporting on the Conference on Evnironment and Development, one of the major events of 1992, as well as on the follow-up to the Conference, was a prime example of the human, technical, financial and professional resources it was able to bring to bear. Quite properly, the forthcoming World Conference on Human Rights was also already receiving extensive publicity. The next preparatory meeting for that Conference, the regional preparatory meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, would be held in Costa Rica in January 1993; unfortunately, budgetary constraints precluded DPI coverage, but the University for Peace had arranged to publicize the meeting within Costa Rica.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

42. Her delegation endorsed the idea of proclaiming 3 May as Press Freedom Day, as proposed by UNESCO. A UNESCO initiative had led to the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration, and a UNESCO seminar held in Asia with DPI support had produced the similar Declaration of Alma Ata on Promoting Independent and Pluralistic Asian Media. Such seminars should be held in other parts of the world, especially the developing world.

43. Although Costa Rica had joined the consensus in the Committee on Information on the two draft resolutions now before the Special Political Committee, her delegation believed that their formulation should be updated; accordingly, she read out a number of textual amendments that it thought the Committee on Information should adopt at its spring session in 1993 when drafting the following year's resolutions.

44. In relation to the Secretary-General's proposal to integrate United Nations information centres with other United Nations offices, it should be pointed out that the University for Peace in Costa Rica had excellent information resources and trained personnel at its disposal and was, in fact, publicizing United Nations activities in many parts of the world, with particular emphasis on the Caribbean subregion. It was already working jointly with both UNESCO and DPI in the field. A good case could be made for designating the University for Peace as a United Nations information centre.

45. Mr. RODRIGUE (Haiti) observed that as the mandate of DPI broadened to keep pace with the expanding activities of the Organization, the Department must refocus and revitalize its activities in keeping with the new international situation, and in order to meet the growing expectations of a public whose interest in the United Nations had awakened. The projection of the image of the United Nations in the world depended on the Department's effectiveness.

46. It was to be congratulated for its excellent publicity campaign for the Rio Conference, and also for its mobilization of information on the tragedies in Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. The sad case of Liberia would merit a similar mobilization. DPI had also been instrumental in making known Haiti's electoral experience, but it should also keep focusing attention on the movement for the restoration of constitutional legality in Haiti.

47. Since information was the only way of coming to know the social conditions in other countries, Haiti supported all DPI publicity on issues such as humanitarian assistance, the war against drugs, the advancement of women and human rights. In the developing countries, information, especially through radio broadcasting and public notices, had become an effective, if still inadequate, means of combating ignorance and teaching civic values and democratic principles.

48. Just as nations needed to have information policies, a new world information and communication order must also be established, with political, psychological and social dimensions. It would do much to bring peoples

(Mr. Rodrigue, Haiti)

together and increase their solidarity and cooperation. It was all the more necessary in that the developing countries could not afford advanced information technologies. The new world information and communication order would allow a more balanced dissemination of information that was more responsive to the cultural needs and intellectual capacities of each society. To bring it about, the developing countries would have to be given the means to improve their communication infrastructures. Haiti therefore supported the UNESCO-administered IPDC, aimed at increasing the free flow of information and promoting better balance in communication capabilities through better trained professionals in the developing countries. The UNESCO-sponsored seminar in Namibia had been a great success and the Windhoek Declaration had attracted considerable interest in other developing countries for the establishment of a national and international partnership on an information strategy.

49. The Secretary-General's decision to open interim information centres in Eastern Europe was an excellent idea, and his delegation hoped that the same would be done in other parts of the world, especially in the Caribbean and in Haiti in particular, where such a centre had already been requested.

50. DPI was working valiantly with dwindling resources and required a commitment from all Member States. His delegation hoped that the Department would endeavour to ensure parity in its publication of French as well as English documents. Its broadcasting to the Caribbean was excellent, and the Creole language programmes should be expanded.

51. Ms. CLEOPAS (Cyprus) observed that the new climate of cooperation in the Committee on Information had produced draft resolutions aimed at eliminating the disparities in the flow of information and promoting the freedom of the press and of information that were essential to the whole process of the democratization of international relations and to global progress, mutual understanding and peaceful co-existence.

52. DPI had new challenges to meet in the post-cold war era, as it disseminated accurate information on newly expanded United Nations activities, especially in the field of peacemaking and peace-keeping, and on the key issues and problems of the day. The Department had taken a balanced approach to fulfilling its enhanced mandate. Its multimedia approach, as evidenced by the success of its reporting on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, deserved support, as did its efforts to develop a more coodinated and cost-effective approach to its publishing policy and programme, which should not, however, be allowed to affect its essential publications.

53. The continued collaboration between UNESCO and DPI, which had recently led to the Alma Ata Declaration, should be encouraged. Other important links in the Organization's information network were the United Nations information centres, and more of them should be established. Cyprus trusted that their integration with other United Nations offices would not in any way undermine their functional autonomy.

(Ms. Cleopas, Cyprus)

54. In Cyprus, the right of freedom of information and expression was constitutionally guaranteed, and the free flow of information was facilitated by its advanced telecommunications infrastructure. Cyprus strongly supported the development of the developing countries' communication infrastructures and capabilities

55. Mr. MOUSSAWI (Lebanon) commended the current level of cooperation between the Committee on Information and UNESCO. He also welcomed the latest version of the World Media Handbook but hoped that the typographical errors, and particularly those relating to Lebanon, would be corrected in future editions.

56. The current gap in information technology had produced, on the one hand, a group of rich countries able to saturate the world with its news bulletins, opinions and preconceptions and, on the other, a group of developing States whose ideas and values were being erased because of their inability to propagate or convey their message. The industrialized countries, with their ample resources, must work to achieve a balance, so that all mankind might be aware of the civilizations and values of the peoples of the developing world. Such efforts would help to promote the principle of intellectual diversity so often advocated by the developed countries and to enrich human thought as a whole. Since the United Nations could contribute significantly to the narrowing of the gap, its capacities in the field of information should be developed and strengthened in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and of human rights legislation.

57. While his delegation welcomed the establishment of United Nations information centres in six member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States and elsewhere, it hoped that such expansion would not take place at the expense of no less important existing centres. In particular, prompt action should be taken, following the improvement of the security situation in Lebanon, to appoint a new director for the information centre at Beirut and to strengthen the centre's activities. Despite all that it had endured during the war, Beirut remained the principal focus for the dissemination of information in the Arab world and the Middle East as a whole.

58. In conclusion, his delegation paid tribute to those who had given their lives while defending freedom of speech and the freedom of the press.

59. Mr. HUQ (Bangladesh) said that his delegation recognized the important role of information in nation-building and promoting amity among nations, and United Nations information centres had an important role to play in informing the public of United Nations activities to promote peace, security and development. In that connection, the absence of a director at the Dakha centre for the last five years was regrettable. He hoped that DPI would take the steps necessary to provide a full-time director soon so that the people of his country could have adequate and timely information regarding the United Nations.

(Mr. Huq, Bangladesh)

60. In order to achieve a free flow of information, Member States should make an honest effort to reduce the current imbalances between developed and developing countries in their respective capabilities for the dissemination of information. In that regard, the United Nations should take the necessary steps to enhance the information infrastructure of developing countries so that they too would be able to project their points of view to the world. After all, the goal of the new information and communication order was to provide an opportunity for all countries to disseminate their views on various issues so as to create consensus.

61. His Government had reaffirmed its commitment to the freedom of press, freedom of expression and freedom of opinion. Bangladesh attached the utmost importance to information as an essential vehicle for the promotion of democracy and development, and was currently examining ways of improving access to information by installing telecommunication and broadcasting systems for remote regions of the country.

62. In conclusion, he expressed his full support for the draft resolutions proposed by the Committee on Information and hoped that they would be adopted by consensus.

63. Mr. AL-OTAIBI (Kuwait) said his delegation shared the concern expressed by some other Member States concerning the effect of a reduction in financial resources on the activities of DPI. The rapid and radical changes of recent years had created new responsibilities for the Organization, and the Department's activities must be adapted accordingly, concentrating, inter alia, on the problems of development and external debt, the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, apartheid and the tragedies of the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Somalia. His delegation also believed in the need for a new world information and communication order based on an equitable exchange of information and looked for a redoubling of efforts by the industrialized countries, the Department and the specialized agencies, particularly UNESCO, to strengthen the media of the developing countries.

64. Despite the very significant role of information in enhancing stability and good relations between States, his delegation sympathized with those countries which had expressed concern about the negative effects of foreign media on their cultures. His country continued to face a threat to its existence, and to the stability and security of the region as a whole, in the form of falsehoods and spurious allegations concerning so-called historic claims to Kuwait disseminated by the Iraqi media. The Security Council had been notified and provided with examples of such falsehoods in early August 1992, in direct contradiction of the Iraqi regime's assertions concerning compliance with Council resolutions.

65. In conclusion, his delegation expressed its support for the draft resolution contained in document A/SPC/47/L.9.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.